

MANSFIELD & DISTRICT

u3a
learn, laugh, live

NEWSLETTER



(cover photo, Martin & Jill Fish)

MARCH 2021

Website: www.u3asites.org.uk/mansfield/home

Flickr: www.flickr.com/photos/mu3a2016

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/349190408987691/

Words from Madam Chair Amanda Kingswell

At the group meeting via Zoom in February, it was nice to see so many of you that have had the COVID-19 vaccination, at least the first one!! We have yet to be invited for ours...let's hope it's not too much longer. So, Boris reckons we'll be back too normal in June...really? So, clubs can start meeting again? I do hope so, I can't wait to get back to the clubs I belong to...we'll have to wait and see. I noticed when I went shopping the other day that the crocuses are out and the daffs are up (though not open yet...they will be by Mother's Day...always seem to be!!). March is my birthday month and I can say that as 2020 didn't really happen I won't be a year older (ha! ha!). I also like March because it starts to see a whisper of spring but can still remind you that winter is still in its back pocket. The clocks go forward on the last weekend of the month which will bring lighter evenings and the promise that warmer weather is heading for us...something to look forward to. Well, that's it from me this time, except to say "Happy Mother's Day" to all the mums out there and as always...stay safe.



Amanda x



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Words from the Editor Bill Harrison

I sincerely hope this March Newsletter finds all our members in good health and staying safe.

Now the government are cranking up the Vaccine process to make us all safe, here's wishing you all get the vaccine, and we can return to some form of normality very soon.

The lighter nights, and the early bulbs emerging from their winter beds to brighten up the views from our windows, inspire us all that the good times are ahead.

It is so rewarding to see so many of our members adapting to the modern technology, that our generations have had to take on board such as the Zoom meetings that have brought us closer together and we sincerely wish that soon we can become a reality and not a virtuality.

We find our u3a's are all in a somewhat of a transition period, as the internet will soon make such interesting changes to the way we operate, and may I add for the better.

I'm sure I speak for all Committee and Group Leaders in thanking you our members for your loyalty during these very strange times. Then when we once again meet up may we all LEARN, LAUGH, LIVE.

Please make sure you have set you reminders and you're to-do-list for the 28 March when British Summer Time begins HOOOOOOORAYYY.

And so, as our hibernation period ends, we look forward to the summer months, to top up our tans and more important our vitamin Ds.

Date for your diary

Guest speaker General Meeting. 16 March 2021

Sarah Slater "Sex, Secrets, Scandals, and Salacious Gossip of the Royal Court 1660 to 1830"

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Dear Jean Hogg,

I hope this email finds you well.

My name is Nicola Camp and I am a PHD researcher at Nottingham Trent University. We are currently looking at factors which influence wellbeing in older adults, particularly during the last year. We have designed an online survey which takes around 30 minutes to complete, the link is here: <https://ntusurvey.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/older-adult-wellbeing-survey-2>

Would it be possible to share this with your members please? I am happy to provide more details if needed.

Kind regards
Nicola Camp

Academic Associate
School of Science and Technology
Nottingham Trent University
Clifton Lane, Nottingham
NG11 8NS

**Mansfield & District u3a
Publicity Co-ordinator
Co-opted Committee Member**
**We are looking for someone to be our PR person
Promoting the u3a ethos as detailed in the
Principles of the u3a Movement**

Role Description

- With your fellow Committee Members promote the u3a ethos as detailed in the Principles of the u3a Movement
- To be aware of all information for the Trustees of Mansfield & District u3a contained in the Induction Pack and to adhere to Mansfield & District u3a's Constitution
- To contact and ask for volunteers to do articles for the Newsletter
- To be proactive in identifying sources of publicity, gathering and collecting news and reports
- To liaise between the Committee and other active volunteers who deal with publicity on behalf of Mansfield & District u3a
- To respond to requests for information of a publicity nature
- To ensure that the Diary of Events is kept up-to-date and all information is correct before putting in the Newsletter or on the Website
- To ensure information on publicity display boards is updated when necessary
- Occasionally to write pieces about Mansfield & District u3a for local newspapers and magazines
- Should it be necessary to increase the membership to promote Mansfield & District u3a in the local community and to produce posters for display and ensure that there is a regular supply of advertising on Mansfield & District u3a in public places e.g., Library, Museum, local Community Newspapers etc
- To keep up-to-date records of contacts
- To report to the Committee Members/Trustees when applicable
- To ensure that copies of any correspondence received or sent is given to the Business Secretary for filing purposes
- Try to be available to attend monthly Committee Meetings as required
- Be available for people to talk to you ensuring they know you are a co-opted Committee member. Pass on their comments to other members of the Committee

Quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all paperwork is completed to the agreed quality standards and complies with Data Protection requirements
Health and Safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Health and Safety practices are performed that are appropriate to self and others • In the event of a fire participate in the safe evacuation of members from the General Meeting in accordance with agreed procedures
Policies and Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The duties and responsibilities of the post will be undertaken in accordance with the policies, procedures and practices of Mansfield u3a • It is the post holder's responsibility to ensure they keep up to date with these policies and other policy documents • All Committee Members must adhere to the Mansfield u3a Data Protection Policy • All Policies and Procedures can be found on the Mansfield u3a website and on the Third Age Trust website once you have registered • The term of office you can serve in this role can be no longer than three years
Expenses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of pocket expenses for paper, printer toner etc can be claimed by submitting receipts to the Treasurer
Length of Service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers and Committee Members shall stand for a period of between 3 and 5 years <p>Post holder:</p> <p>Chairman: Amanda Kingswell</p> <p>Date: February 2021</p>

Message from National Army Museum via Crowdcast

Having attended this virtual event held by the National Army Museum on Thursday 11.2.21, the details of which were in the electronic version of the TAT Newsletter.

Dr Peter Johnson gave an interesting talk on The British Army in Germany since 1945. He also had a book available to purchase on their website entitled 'The British Forces in Germany: The Lived Experience.

The National Army Museum is based in Chelsea and they had set up this exhibition entitled Foe to Friend. Due to COVID-19 they could not open, so this was a way to showcase it.

The talk covered the time after the war when Russia, France, America and Britain had bases in Germany. When the majority of the bases were closed, Dr Johnson contacted our Army and they allowed him to bring home some of the memorabilia to the Museum. Five lorries came back, two of the lorries driven by Dr Johnson himself.

The talk detailed the conditions at the time and how they had to deal with the Cold War and IRA bombs at their bases etc. Many of the people watching submitted questions, as many of them were involved with these times. There is still a British Army base in Germany.

Ian McCannah, Chair of the TAT, thanked the Museum for the interesting talk. He explained his brother-in-law was the child of a soldier and a German Fraulein from those times.

Information sent from the National Army Museum which might be interesting.

Carole Harrison
u3a Business Secretary

Dear u3a members,

Thank you very much for joining the event today with the National Army Museum. We hope that you enjoyed it.

The link to share a replay of the talk is here: <https://www.crowdcast.io/e/britisharmyinger-many>

If you enjoyed the talk today, you may also enjoy this virtual guided tour, which you can watch here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9XYrcA1ZWTg>

To find out more about the Foe to Friend exhibition you can do so by following this link to our website: <https://www.nam.ac.uk/series/foe-friend>

The National Army Museum has a regular programme of events, including a weekly free Friday talk at 12pm. You can view the full programme and sign up for future events here: <https://www.nam.ac.uk/whats-on>

We hope we can welcome you back to the National Army Museum, when we reopen to the public. Until then, stay safe and well!

Very best wishes, The National Army Museum

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9XYrcA1ZWTg&authuser=0>

NATWEST ZOOM MEETING

It is great to see that our monthly meetings are attracting more and more members. On Tuesday this week, we had almost 50 screens with some being shared.

Amanda welcomed Tom Lane, Community Banker, Retail Banking for NatWest. He spoke to us about ways to avoid being scammed.

I would hope that most of us were already aware of most of what he warned us about, but I must say it was upsetting to hear of all the ways the fraudsters find to cheat us out of our money and identities.

One of the things he advised, which I must admit I don't do very often, is to delete our online search history. Philip, once again, managed to find an interesting and informative speaker, and received thanks from Amanda.

Everyone seemed to enjoy a quick chat with their friends and June Fell especially, was overjoyed to be on Zoom for the first time with us. If you haven't managed it yet, give it a go next month. If you need help, get in touch.

Yvonne Kennison

Mu3a Birdwatching & Wildlife Group

Birdwatching in Mallorca Notes from Neville Davies Pandion's Search.

During my first visits to Majorca back in 1990, I recall walking into the area of the Albufereta Marsh just outside of Puerto Pollenca, and seeing an Osprey drifting overhead and out to sea. Although my early guide book by the late Graham Hearl stated they were a resident species, I was wasn't really expecting to see one – but over the subsequent visits I got to see many more, and each time I see one I have to stop to watch it, they seem to command your attention. Also, here one April afternoon, I watched one hunting over the water and being amused as it took four attempts to catch a fish, they are not always successful, but there beyond were two more who had taken flight and began slowly circling higher and higher and then they were off – these were migrating birds and soon they were out of sight.

Albufereta Marsh

I have spent many an hour watching them over the Boquer Valley and along the coves of Cala San Vicente, but it is the Albufera Marsh that has given me my best views of them (and where these photos were taken). It is a common sight to see one perched on one of the pylons along the right-hand bank of the Siurana Canal that runs into the reserve, and although they are fish eaters and not a threat to the birds, when they pass too close to the waders and ducks they all take off in a burst of panic before slowly descending back down when they are happy that danger has passed.



The Osprey – *Pandion*

haliateus sees the species name coming from the Greek word 'hali' which means 'sea' and 'aetos' which means 'eagle'. Pandion was the legendary Greek king of Athens. Why the biologist Savigny in 1809 chose to name the Osprey after a Greek king is a mystery. It is thought that (as the tale goes) the king's daughters met tragic ends. Procne was transformed into a Swallow and Philomela into a Nightingale. The king's punishment for his lifelong cruelty was to spend eternity searching for his daughters. The Osprey does indeed spend a lot of time quartering above the waters in an almost 'regal' fashion.

Osprey with a Grey Mullet

Shrill piping and yelping calls may first give away their presence. This resident species is a large bird with a wingspan of 145 – 160cm and a weight of 1.1 – 1.65kg. Fish is their only diet, and they build a large nest of branches and twigs which is moss lined in a tall tree, where 2-3 white eggs with red-brown spots and blotches are laid. The thick nest sees twigs added to it each year and is usually situated in the top of a Pine tree. They are a large, long winged bird and look very pale from below. Dark primaries and carpel patches give the underwing a distinctive pattern and is a good identification feature. Both females and juveniles have a darker breast band on a buff background. The long tail has a broad dark terminal band and three or four narrower dark bands.



When circling over a lake they can resemble a large immature gull but once it spots prey, it will hover with deep, powerful wingbeats and dangling legs. It will descend in stages until it is ready to dive which it will do at high speed. Occasionally they disappear below the surface before emerging with a catch (but not always). To help them grip the fish with their specially adapted talons, the fish are turned to face forward before the Osprey flies off. This is believed to assist a streamlined passage through the air. If a caught fish is too large the Osprey will let it go and birds have been known to drown as a result of claws catching into bones or scales.

Cuber Reservoir is another good site for this elegant species, and one early May morning I had crossed the dam and had my usual stop at the picnic bench by the stone building, watching Red Kites, Booted Eagles and Black Vultures overhead whilst eating my customary Almond cakes, before crossing the Torrent de Baranc stream to follow the path back to the car. There ahead of me on one of the pylons was an Osprey, tucking into a catch and tearing at the fish with real intent. I stopped and used the cover of the Holm Oaks to partially hide me and set my telescope up to watch it feed. I had a magical moment watching this stunning bird feeding away, then clean its powerful hooked bill, ruffle it's feathers several times before flying off low over the reservoir – and then enjoying the green of the water reflecting on its pale belly. What a moment. I can picture it now as if it were yesterday



u3a Birdwatching & Wildlife Group by Ken White

Orchids in Springtime in Mallorca

Mirrors, Men and Bumble Bees

by Neville Davies – Our man in Mallorca

This week I am going to look at some of the orchids to be found on Majorca which can be found from this month, with other species due to flower in March, April and even May, so there will be some further articles as the spring progresses.

Majorca has an impressive variety of orchids which can be found from the coastal areas right up into the mountains and in the woods and forests.

Orchids are diverse and widespread with colourful blooms, some full of fragrances, and they are one of two of the largest families of flowering plants. The number of orchid species in the world is nearly equal to the number of bony fishes, more than twice the number of bird species and four times the number of mammal species.

The word orchid actually derives from the Greek word '*orchis*' for testicle, because of the shape of the root tubers in some species of the genus *Orchis*. Generally, these 'non-woody' perennials are either terrestrial or epiphytic (growing on other plants rather than being rooted in the soil). In their natural habitats this means using trees or rocks as support and feeding from the plant debris accumulated around their roots. Did you know that some species of Orchid can survive for up to 100 years?

There are some great sites on Majorca for orchids. The Albufera has some good varieties and is one of the areas I like to search out the Bug, Giant and Marsh Orchids. Son Real is another good site where Bug, Tongue, Pyramidal, Bee and Bumblebee orchids can all be found. The La Gola wetland site in Puerto Pollensa is a gem of a place for orchids.

My first ever Mirror Orchid was from here and Bee Orchids can be plentiful in some years. This site also has the Tongue Orchid which also includes a sub-species too.

Forests and woods can be great places to search out certain varieties and even small areas of Pine copse such as the one at the Albufereta Marsh just prior to the two dry-stone walls you walk between, hold a good number of Pyramidal Orchids, and although they are a deep pink, they can actually blend in incredibly well with the surrounding greens.

Look out for a naked man!

For me one of my favourite orchids has to be the Naked Man (or Italian Man Orchid). I have only found one before so finding another is long overdue.

Flowering from February to May it was first described from Italy. They have broad lance-shaped leaves which can be either spotted or unspotted often with a wavy edge to them.

Grassy areas, marquis and open woods form their habitat, and it is their flowers which to me are very characteristic.

The inflorescence egg-shaped flowers are compact and dense opening from the bottom upwards. The sepals are a pale-pink, tapering to a point (and incurved) and very eye-catching. The lip is white or pink, deeply divided into three with the middle lobe subdivided.

The spurs point downwards which is a good identification feature.

To say I was excited when I first found this species was an understatement, and I long to find some more.

Naked Man Orchid

Found in the same habitat as the Naked Man orchid, the Mirror Orchid is another special plant for me, having found my first ever at La Gola. Also flowering from February to May, it is not uncommon to find them associated with Bee Orchids. A single stem holds 2-8 flowers with the outer sepals' green (often tipped with brownish-violet). The lip on this species is only slightly curved with a rounded middle lobe. In the middle is a shiny blue speculum (which gives the species its name due to an almost reflection-like appearance), with a yellow margin in the middle. I was overjoyed at seeing this species which was amongst a small clump of Bee Orchids literally just off the path leading underneath the Pines. I laid down on the ground to get close to the plant, and using the macro-option on my camera, set about getting some great close-up pictures (see the one in this article). At the time however, I heard a voice from behind me shout out '*are you ok?*' The couple walking towards me thought that I had collapsed. I was very grateful for their concerns and when I explained what I was doing we all had a good laugh



Mirror Orchid

There is another delightful little orchid to be found on the island too, and is aptly named the Bumblebee Orchid. Several species of orchids mimic certain insects to help with pollination, and there are some really good lookalikes. Take for example the Spider, Bee, Fly and Bumblebee Orchids, and if you look close enough at the flowers of the Naked Man and similar orchids they do indeed look like tiny people. Nature is so diverse and wonderful sometimes. Flowering from late February into May, this delightful little Orchid really resembles a Bumble Bee. This is another plant that can blend in well with its surroundings, and my first little group of these special orchids were amongst some short grass where I had just spotted a different plant, and leaning over to look at that one allowed me to spot this little group.



Yellow Bee Orchid

My first love is the birds, but when I am out and about regardless of the habitat, I am always looking around at what plants of interest there are, butterflies, fungi in the autumn and anything else of interest.

My eyes are scanning over the water, on the tops of bushes, in the trees, above the mountains, across the sky, back behind me, ahead of me and even skywards. It's no wonder from time to time I take a tumble from not looking where I am going.

Usually, I am alone when this happens so I can spare my blushes, but on occasion someone has seen me doing a triple-salco into a ditch, or plunging waist deep in water, then my blushes can't be hidden.

But it's all part of the fun, and for me, one very special orchid eludes me still to this day in the woodlands of Majorca, and one I am determined one day to seek out, and that is the stunning Violet Bird's Nest Orchid – even the name is tantalizing. One day...



u3a Pathfinders Walking Group: Ken White, Val Hart

Alfreton Park 'Blue Bell Woods' Circular Walk 12 April

Following the recent announcements from the government regarding the relaxing of the COVID-19 measures, we are planning a walk on Monday 12 April for a group of SIX persons. Should there be more than six wishing to come along we will arrange a further day(s) to repeat the walk.

If you wish to reserve a place on this walk please contact Ken White, (email ken@atrain.org.uk or Tel 07973 315050) or Val Hart (email valerie.hart@hotmail.co.uk or Tel 07745 208248)

Distance: 6.00 miles (10.93km) 14approx. 3.5hrs including refreshments

Terrain Type: Open countryside.

Meeting Time: 10.00am in Alfreton Park, Postcode **DE55 7AL**. Plenty of free parking available

Standard of walk: Moderate.

Walk Leaders: Ken White & Val Hart

We begin our walk at the Cricket Ground in Alfreton Park Postcode **DE55 7AL**.



Our Walk:

Alfreton is thought to be the site of the ancient town of 'Elstretune' as mentioned in the Domesday Book.

Local legend says that King Alfred gave the town its name and who is said to have lived in a house on King Street. Remains of a Roman fortlet and Roman roads suggest that the settlement predates King Alfred by several centuries.

One of Alfreton's most famous residents was Robert Watchorn who went on to become Commissioner of Immigration based on Ellis Island, New York.

We then pass St Martin's Church which is a Grade II listed building and dates from the 12th Century. The Priest's Vestry and the Tower are evidence of this.

The walk then progresses into the countryside and across the golf course and eventually follow the footpath into Shaw Wood which at this time of year is full of Bluebells and many other wild spring flowers.

On exiting the wood, we will see Wingfield Manor on the hillside, this was built in the 1440s for the wealthy Ralph, Lord Cromwell, treasurer of the Exchequer for Henry V1. Later it became the home of Bess of Hardwick's husband, the Earl of Shrewsbury.

It was here that Mary Queen of Scots was held prisoner at various times between 1569 and 1585. Her jailor was the Earl of Shrewsbury and his wife, Bess of Hardwick. Mary was lodged in the north-east tower with views across the valley. Mary became severely ill with "grief of the spleen", symptoms which her doctor attributed to "windy matters ascending to the head".

While Wingfield was being cleaned, Mary was moved to Chatsworth, another property belonging to Shrewsbury. Shrewsbury himself fell very ill during the summer, displaying similar symptoms to those of Mary, namely "hot choleric vapours" rising to his head. Was all this the doings of Bess?

Our walk then takes us between South Wingfield and Oakerthorpe, then through the church grounds of All Saints Parish Church.

There has been a church on this site for 1,000 years. It was probably a wooden building of Saxon origin. Historical records show that a stone-built church was here in 1269, already dedicated to All Saints.



About 1441, Lord Cromwell had the square tower and main body of the church rebuilt. It is Grade II listed. The font is of Norman origin.

From here we walk up a hill to the Peacock Inn at Oakenclough which dates back into the eleventh century and is reputed to be the oldest inn in Derbyshire.

It was rebuilt in 1613 and has a most interesting history; legend has it that Dick Turpin, one of the most famous highwaymen in English history, stopped off at the inn on his ride to York.

An underground passage around five feet high and about four feet wide in the bottom of the cellar in the Peacock Inn is reported to lead to nearby Wingfield Manor.

From here we take the path across the countryside and back to Alfreton from where we began our walk.



THE DRUCE – PORTLAND AFFAIR

Sent in by Sue Longdon

Six years ago, when my husband Bob and I ran our u3a Local History Group I was researching a presentation on the history of the inhabitants of Welbeck Abbey I came across the very strange case of a claim on the Portland peerage.

Mrs Anna Maria Druce at T.C. Druce's grave in Highgate Cemetery.
The Penny Illustrated Paper

In 1898, a woman by the name of Anna Maria Druce set up a claim to the Portland peerage on behalf of her son, Sidney. She claimed her father-in-law, Thomas Charles Druce who had died in 1864 and the 5th Duke of Portland (The Tunnelling Duke) were one and the same person. The 5th Duke is known for his eccentricities and his obsessive need for privacy led him to "disappear" for long periods.



Mr Druce was the owner of a "Bazaar" or as we would say a department store in London, coincidentally also having an underground passageway, by which Druce would appear or disappear from the store unexpectedly.

Little is known of his early life before he bought the Bazaar for a considerable sum.

Mrs Anna Maria Druce petitioned the Ecclesiastical Courts for permission to exhume Thomas Charles' body, claiming when he had supposedly been buried in Highgate Cemetery in 1864, in fact the coffin was filled with stones, that the funeral was a charade, that he was still alive and continuing to live on as the 5th Duke at Welbeck. She also started proceedings in the Civil Court to have Thomas Charles' will set aside.

She was claiming the Portland inheritance on behalf of Sidney, her son by her dead husband Walter. Walter was Thomas Charles' third son by his marriage to Annie May, but the first legitimate one of the marriages because it was discovered, as a result of Anna Maria's action Thomas Charles' first wife was still alive at the time their first two children were born.

Witnesses stated that they had seen Thomas Charles after he had supposedly been buried and also some said they were aware that he and the Duke were the same person. Anna Maria claimed to have seen her father-in-law after his alleged death.

The judge granted permission for the coffin to be opened, but notice of appeal was given to prevent this. Herbert, Thomas Charles' first son had objected and it is suspected so did the 6th Duke of Portland because it called into question his inheritance.

The case was widely reported in the Press and the story reached Australia, where someone calling himself George Hollamby Druce said his claim to the inheritance took precedence over the one set up by Mrs Druce.

He claimed to be the grandson of Thomas Charles/5th Duke by Thomas Charles' first marriage.

Anna Maria revelled in her notoriety and even refused a considerable sum of money offered by the legal representatives of the Duke of Portland and Herbert Druce, believing she would win her case.

The case became bogged down in legal technicalities, who owned the vault, who had the right to give judgement, the number of claimants.

Eventually some witnesses were tried for perjury and it wasn't until 1907 Herbert Druce consented to the exhumation of his father's grave, which was found to contain the recognisable remains of Thomas Charles Druce.

A little seasonal poem, sent in by Pearl brown

THE MIRACLE

I had waited all winter for a sign
Something wondrous, a miracle divine
Today it came, a very lovely thing
A crocus in the close a-blossoming
Blue wings a-gleam, a song bird's sweetest strain
Another gladness for Spring's miracle again

Annie Stone

A nice little poem appropriate for the time of year. By Tracey Hatton

Fresh beginnings

Dawn light chases the night dark
I see a fresh beginning
A new born cries in the delivery room
I hear a fresh beginning
Nibbling a shoot that has broken winter's carapace I taste a fresh beginning
I hug myself and say "all will be well"
I feel the start of a fresh beginning

We bid a fond farewell to Joe Crosby; we wish him well in his new home.

"I have recently moved house to Cumbria as I am getting too old at 91 to be more than 150 miles from my nearest relative".

"I now live across the road from my sister! Obviously, I cannot now get involved in u3a activities in Mansfield u3a activities – which I shall miss very much – so cheerio".

All the Best & Keep Safe

Joe Crosby

It is with sorrow that we announce the deaths of two members:

Ian Shillinglaw and Fred Walker

Both played a part in the Mansfield u3a.

Fred Walker was a member of the Garden Group where he supported Marian, his wife, in helping with the raffle and garden sales.

Ian Shillinglaw joined Mansfield u3a just after its formation and soon joined his wife, Norma, on the Committee where he served in various offices, including Vice-Chairman.

Mansfield u3a played a large part in both their lives for they enjoyed the activities (especially the Current Affairs Group which Norma ran for many years) and the varied social activities and holidays abroad.

Our sincere condolences to their wives and families.

Funeral arrangements will be published when known.



SciTech 2020 Report by Ian Boucher

The Science and Technology group, (known as SciTech) has had a fairly good year. Our only actual meeting was in February 2020 when we looked at the workings and development of the Quantum Computer.

Like all groups we have adapted to accommodate the year's restrictions and continued throughout the year with monthly reports on a wide variety of scientific and technological subjects which were circulated to members.

The following are two examples of the subjects circulated –

Samuel Slater (June 9, 1768 – April 21, 1835) was born near Belper. After completing his apprenticeship in the cotton industry, he moved to USA, and became known as the man who brought the Industrial Revolution to the USA from Great Britain.

Neuralink? – Linking the Human Brain with Artificial Intelligence.

The Neuralink Company announced that it was working on a “sewing machine-like” device capable of implanting very thin wire threads into the brain attached to an electronic module. The company was aiming to make devices to treat serious [brain diseases](#) in the short-term.

Due to the current restrictions, I am putting the group on hold until we can meet as normal.

The group looks forward to the lifting of restrictions when we can meet again as normal.

Ian F P Boucher

Strollers: Sue Howlett

It is looking very hopeful for our stroll in April, which will be on April 14th. We will however need to adhere to the rule of 6 so we will make contact nearer the time to arrange the groups and the various starting times. We will meet at the Visitors Centre in Edwinstowe at the allotted time.

It will be wonderful to see people even if it is only 6 of us.

Let us hope that the weather is kind to us and in our groups, we can enjoy a drink and a snack out of doors.

Hugs

It's wondrous what a hug can do.
A hug can cheer you when you're blue.
A hug can say, "I love you so," or
"Gee, I hate to see you go."



A hug is "Welcome back again," and
"Great to see you! Where've you been?"
A hug can soothe a small child's pain,
And bring a rainbow after rain.

The hug! There's just no doubt about it...
We scarcely could survive without it!
A hug delights and warms and charms
It must be why God gave us arms.

Hugs are great for fathers and mothers,
Sweet for sisters, swell for brothers.
And chances are your favorite aunts
Love them more than potted plants.

Kittens crave them; puppies love them;
Heads of state are not above them.
A hug can break the language barrier
And make your travels so much merrier.

No need to fret about your store of 'em;
The more you give, the more there's more of em!
So stretch those arms out without delay,
and GIVE SOMEONE a HUG TODAY!

By Dean Walley

It is all really applicable just now except for the last verse which ends by saying 'Give someone a hug today'. I don't think Boris would approve of that!

Take care,

Pat Blackwell (Antiques and collectables group)

Zoom Quiz Night: Hosted by Ken Gilbert

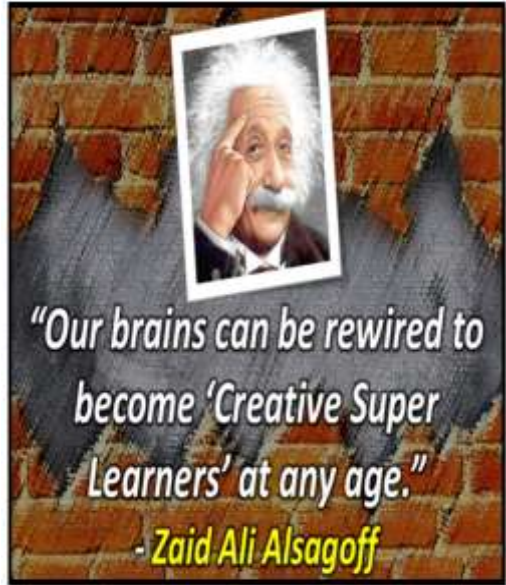
We held our fourth virtual Quiz Night on 24 February and it was wonderful to see 35 members join in.

Ken (Gilbert) had put together a very entertaining mixture of questions ranging from all the answers being numbers from 1-10, Modes of Transport, General Knowledge, Famous Pairs, and he finished off the evening with a list of famous catch phrases and we had to say which character they belonged to.

There weren't any points awarded for that category, which was a shame as it might have boosted my overall score.

Sue & Bob (Longden) came top with a very impressive score. Well done Sue and Bob.

Jacqueline and Aiden (Harkin) have agreed to host the **next Quiz Night which will be on 24 March at 7.00pm.**



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The details will be sent out to everyone nearer the time, but just as a matter of interest, all our Zoom meetings have the same ID and passcode, whether it be for social meetings or the monthly meeting so once you have your Zoom account, you only have to log in using these same details.

Quite a few of us are going to join in with a meeting hosted by Beeston u3a next week to explore a new format for a social evening, so watch out for details on our FB page and Website if we decide we can go ahead and organise one.

Take care everyone.

Yvonne Kennison

Alphabet-Writing for Pleasure February 2021 by David Drew

It was with no little trepidation that I nudged the store doors open with my right knee, peering round the edge to see what sort of reception I might receive. I'm not saying Fred the storeman was a grumpy old sod it was just that he could be, well, difficult. In a grumpy sort of way.

You could judge the reception by the grill separating him from the rest of humanity. Fully raised, no problem. Half-closed storm cones hoisted. Barely open, gales expected. It was almost shut. Barely room to slip my requisition through the miniscule gap.

He suddenly loomed out of the darkness, snatching my flimsy and glaring at me lowered his specs to read the requisition. Pushing his glasses back on his forehead he slammed it down on the counter causing me to wince. '500 words he snarled, don't you lot know the consonant mines are on short time due to the ink wells running dry, its time you students climbed out of your ivory towers and joined the real world.'

'Been warning you for years we have, no one would listen, no one believed that words are a finite resource and what with that internetty thingy, well the explosion in use has finally caught up with you. If I was you, I'd contact the Countdown studio those buggers have been hovering consonants up for years. Hear that thudding from the back my lad? That's chickens coming home to roost then dropping stone dead off their perches'.

He pushed my assignment back and turning away slammed the grill shut.

Perplexed, I returned to my tutor and explained the situation. Scratching his neck, he picked up the phone, 'can you ask professor Willett's to contact me, you should find him in lecture theatre 3 and yes it's very urgent'.

He unexpectedly paled and turned the volume up on his flat screen TV which was behind me.

'Good god, it's worse than we thought...the vowel vaults are almost empty...we've all got to learn sign language...emergency courses are being arranged...'

And with that the alphabet dried up...

Gardening Group: Marilyn Dibble, Janet Whitlam

For our first Garden Group meeting of the year, we had a fabulous Zoom talk by Martin Fish, one of our favourite and well-known speakers.

His lovely wife Jill filmed the talk. About 25 people attended the meeting, well done to those who grasped the technology.

Martin gave us a huge amount of info about pruning, planting and sowing seeds. Also identifying many plants that are in our gardens at the moment.

His flower arranging skills were brilliant, taking a humble bunch of tulips and making them into a beautiful bouquet using greenery from the garden.

Members asked several questions at the end of the talk which were quickly answered. Martin has been wonderful over the last year sending us monthly newsletters to help us keep on track with our gardens.

Garden Group Zoom Talk by Martin Fish



(Zoom Meeting Welcome with Martin Fish)



(Helleborus Orientalis)





(Cane Orchid, Dendrobium / Moth Orchid, Phalaenopsis)



(Martin & Jill Fish, Made with Love)



March 2021

Hi everyone,

I was hoping to say that spring has sprung but judging by the temperatures during the first few days of March, it still feels like winter! There is an old saying "in like a lion, out like a lamb", so I'm hoping that this cold start to the month will mean that the end of March will be warmer and sunny!

Despite the cool weather, the garden is gradually starting to wake up and it's lovely to see the bright colours of crocus, early daffodils and hellebores which seem to be flowering their heads off at the moment. Winter flowering honeysuckle, viburnum and witch hazel is also in full flower and if you get up close to them you can enjoy their beautiful fragrances.

Over the past 12 months we all had plenty of time to make the most of our gardens and as part of Boris's road map, hopefully we can meet outside with a small group of family or friends from the end of March, so now is the time to get on with the spring tidy up to get it ready for action!

Finally, we'd like to welcome the new groups that have joined us in receiving the monthly newsletter. These are garden clubs, WI's, u3as and other groups that I've spoken to on Zoom over the winter months. One of the advantages of doing talks and demos on Zoom is that I can be anywhere in the country!

If you know of any other groups that might like to receive our monthly gardening newsletter, please do let us know and we can add them to our list. We will send it to the club secretary who can forward it to members.

The gardener's diary with Martin Fish

Shrubs grown for their colourful stems such as dogwoods or late summer flowering shrubs like spiraea and buddleia can be pruned back to older wood. This encourages a flush of strong new growth.

The grass is starting to grow now so it's time to get your mower out. For the first cut of the season give the lawn a light trim to just take off the top and to collect any old leaves and twigs on the lawn.

March is also a good time to apply a moss killer if moss is a problem after the wet winter. Lawn sand containing Sulphate of iron is readily available in garden centres. The

secret is to follow the instructions and apply it very thinly and evenly over the lawn area. The iron scorches the moss turning it black and after a couple of weeks it can be raked out.

Roses can be pruned any time now to maintain a good shape and to encourage new flowering stems. Cut out any dead or diseased stems and then prune back the main stems just above a bud, by half or two-thirds to create an open shape.

Now is a good time to prune hydrangeas. The large mophead types (*Hydrangea macrophylla*) with their pink and blue heads are pruned by dead heading back to the plump buds a few inches down the stem. You can also thin up to a quarter of the congested stems back to ground level to encourage new growth that will flower next year. *Hydrangea paniculata* with cone shaped flowers and the white H. 'Annabelle' can all be pruned hard back as they flower on new growth.

Don't be in too much of a hurry to sow vegetable seeds in the garden, but as the soil does warm up and dry out you can plant shallot bulbs directly into the garden and sow broad beans.

Start sowing lettuce seeds in trays or small pots to produce plants for an early salad crop.

Sow some this week and then again in a fortnight for a continuous supply.

If you have a greenhouse or conservatory, plant a few seed potatoes in large pots (10-litre) for an early crop of new potatoes.

Mulch between plants in the border with garden compost to help raise the organic matter content of the soil. This improves fertility and water retention during the summer months.

Now is the perfect time to lift large clumps of herbaceous perennials and divide them into smaller clumps for planting around the garden.

Sow tomato and pepper seeds into small pots of compost and stand them in a warm place to germinate. A propagator or warm windowsill is ideal.

Enjoy your garden and keep safe.

For more weekly gardening tips and advice from Martin visit "Pots & Trowels" on Facebook or subscribe on YouTube for free.

Happy gardening

Martin Fish.

www.martinfish.com

A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales. The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small. The little girl stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale. Irritated, the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; It was physically impossible. The little girl said, 'When I get to heaven, I will ask Jonah'. The teacher asked, 'What if Jonah went to hell?' The little girl replied, 'Then you ask him'.

A teacher was observing her classroom of children while they were drawing. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's work. As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was. The girl replied, 'I'm drawing God.' The teacher paused and said, 'But no one knows what God looks like'. Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, 'They will in a minute'.

A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five- and six-year-olds. After explaining the commandment to 'Honour' thy Father and thy Mother, she asked, 'Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?' Without missing a beat one little boy (the oldest of a family) answered, 'Thou shall not kill.'

One day a little girl was sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly noticed that her mother had several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast on her brunette head. She looked at her mother and inquisitively asked, 'Why are some of your hairs white, Mum?' Her mother replied, 'Well, every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white.' The little girl thought about this revelation for a while and then said, 'Mummy, how come ALL of grandma's hairs are white?'

The children had all been photographed, and the teacher was trying to persuade them each to buy a copy of the group picture. 'Just think how nice it will be to look at it when you are all grown up and say, 'There's Jennifer, she's a lawyer,' or 'That's Michael, He's a doctor.' A small voice at the back of the room rang out, 'And there's the teacher, she's dead.'

A teacher was giving a lesson on the circulation 'Then why is it that while I am standing upright in the ordinary position the blood doesn't run into my feet?' A little fellow shouted, "Cause your feet aren't empty".

The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic Elementary School for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note, and posted on the apple tray:

'Take only ONE. God is watching.'

Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies.

A child had written a note, 'Take all you want. God is watching the apples.'



Shoutout to everyone who can still remember their childhood phone number but can't remember the password they created yesterday.

© I Might Be Funny

You are my people.

**AND SO ENDS
ANOTHER WEEK
WITHOUT ME
BECOMING
UNEXPECTEDLY
RICH.**

Too good to not share 🤔

1. When one door closes and another door opens, you are probably in prison.
 2. To me, "drink responsibly" means don't spill it.
 3. Age 60 might be the new 40, but 9:00 pm is the new midnight.
 4. It's the start of a brand new day, and I'm off like a herd of turtles.
 5. The older I get, the earlier it gets late.
 6. When I say, "The other day," I could be referring to any time between yesterday and 15 years ago.
 7. I remember being able to get up without making sound effects.
 8. I had my patience tested. I'm negative.
 9. Remember, if you lose a sock in the dryer, it comes back as a Tupperware lid that doesn't fit any of your containers.
 10. If you're sitting in public and a stranger takes the seat next to you, just stare straight ahead and say, "Did you bring the money?"
 11. When you ask me what I am doing today, and I say "nothing," it does not mean I am free. It means I am doing nothing.
 12. I finally got eight hours of sleep. It took me three days, but whatever.
 13. I run like the winded.
 14. I hate when a couple argues in public, and I missed the beginning and don't know whose side I'm on.
 15. When someone asks what I did over the weekend, I squint and ask, "Why, what did you hear?"
 16. When you do squats, are your knees supposed to sound like a goat chewing on an aluminum can stuffed with celery?
 17. I don't mean to interrupt people. I just randomly remember things and get really excited.
 18. When I ask for directions, please don't use words like "east."
 19. Don't bother walking a mile in my shoes. That would be boring. Spend 30 seconds in my head. That'll freak you right out.
 20. Sometimes, someone unexpected comes into your life out of nowhere, makes your heart race, and changes you forever. We call those people cops.
 21. My luck is like a bald guy who just won a comb.
- Which one is YOUR favorite?

GOD & LAWN CARE

GOD to ST. FRANCIS:

Frank, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there on the planet? What happened to the dandelions, violets, milkweeds and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long-lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honey bees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colours by now. But all I see are these green rectangles.

ST. FRANCIS:

It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers 'weeds' and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

GOD:

Grass? But, it's so boring. It's not colourful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees, only grubs and sod worms. It's sensitive to temperatures. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

ST. FRANCIS:

Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

GOD:

The spring rains and warm weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy.

ST. FRANCIS:

Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it, sometimes twice a week.

GOD:

They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?

ST. FRANCIS:

Not exactly, Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

GOD:

They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

ST. FRANCIS:

No, Sir, just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

GOD:

Now, let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And, when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

ST. FRANCIS:

Yes, Sir.

GOD:

These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

ST. FRANCIS:

You aren't going to believe this, Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it, so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

GOD:

What nonsense. At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn, they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. It's a natural cycle of life.

ST. FRANCIS:

You better sit down, Lord. The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and pay to have them hauled away.

GOD:

No!? What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter to keep the soil moist and loose?

ST. FRANCIS:

After throwing away the leaves, they go out and buy something which they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

GOD:

And where do they get this mulch?

ST. FRANCIS:

They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch.

GOD:

Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore. St. Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?

ST. CATHERINE:

'Dumb and Dumber', Lord. It's a story about....

GOD:

Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story from St. Francis...

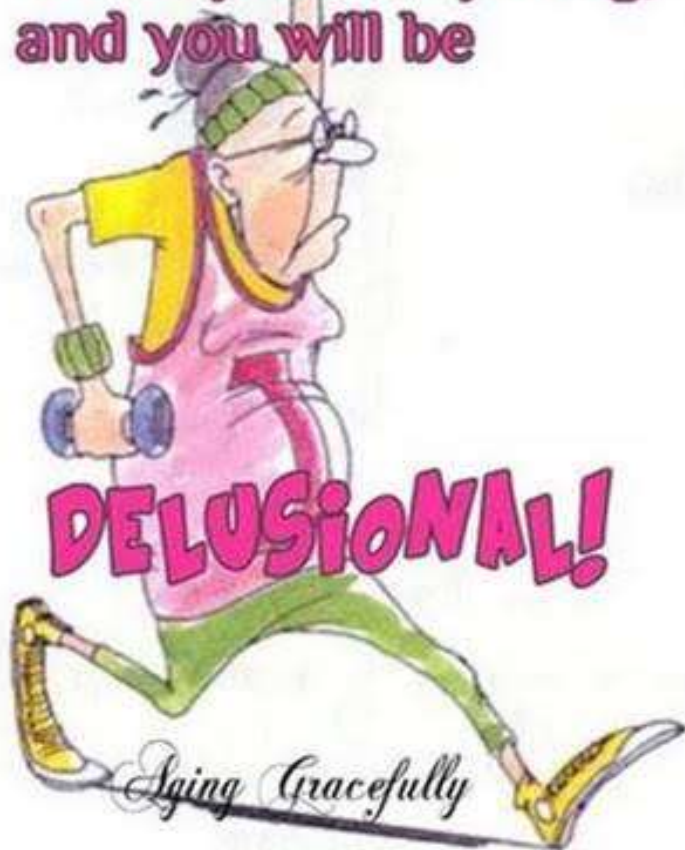
**They say
marriages
are made
in Heaven.
But so is
thunder and
lightning.**

~ Clint Eastwood



Bizwaremagic's Funny Quotes

Think you are old,
and you will be old.
Think you are young,
and you will be



COVID19 vaccination.

Book online: <https://swiftqueue.co.uk/nottinghamc19vpatient.php>

or

<https://www.nhs.uk/.../coro.../book-coronavirus-vaccination/>

The infographic is titled "THE ROAD TO FREEDOM" in large, bold, white letters on a black background. It is divided into four main sections representing different months, each with a date and a step name. To the right of the infographic is a photograph of Boris Johnson, the UK Prime Minister at the time, looking down.

- MAR 8 STEP ONE A**
 - Schools re-open, childcare allowed
 - One plus one social meetings outdoors
 - One visitor to care home residents
 - Stay at home stays in place
- MAR 29 STEP ONE B**
 - Rule of Six
 - Outdoor sports
 - Stay Local
 - Work from home where possible
 - Still no overseas travel
- APR 12 STEP TWO**
 - Non-essential retail, personal care premises, hairdressers and nail salons, libraries, gyms, zoos and theme parks can reopen
 - Pubs and restaurants can reopen outdoors. No need for substantial meal, no curfews
 - Wider social distancing rules continue
 - One household can stay at a cottage or holiday let
- MAY 17 STEP THREE**
 - Rule of Six will be dropped outdoors
 - Two households can meet indoors
 - Hotels, cinemas, soft play areas re-open
 - 1,000 people or half hall permitted at indoor sports venues. Outdoor venues 4,000 people or half hall. 10,000 allowed at Wembley
 - International travel possible
 - Review of social distancing
 - Review of certificates for jobs, tests
- JUN 21 STEP FOUR**
 - All legal limits on social contact to go
 - Remaining hospitality re-open
 - Restrictions on large events lifted
 - Restrictions for weddings may still be in effect

March 8th: Students will return to schools and university students on practical courses will return to the classroom setting. Also, socially distanced outdoor mixing with one person from outside of your household is allowed.

March 29th: The rule of six is reinstated and applied to outdoor mixing. Whilst outdoor sports and leisure can commence again.

April 12th: Retail opens back up, outdoor hospitality opens, and indoor leisure facilities such as gyms will reopen.

June 21st: All legal restrictions should end

Alongside this the PM is reviewing proposals on social distancing, facemasks etc to decide how and when is right to change these rules.

It is important to remember these dates are provisional and subject to change, but this is amazing news to see life returning to normality.

IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION FROM YVONNE KENNISON

First of all, here's hoping that everyone is keeping safe and well. If anyone is struggling or needing any help in any way, please don't hesitate to let me or any of the Committee know. We will do our best to help in any way we can.

Email treasurer.mansfieldu3a@gmail.com or businesssec.mansfieldu3a@gmail.com

Subscriptions 2021. New members: £17. Associate members £8.50.

Cheques payable to *Mansfield and District u3a*

The Membership Renewal Form can be downloaded from the website or will be available from the Treasurer at the monthly meetings.

Please Note: All current members must complete all sections of the Membership Renewal Form to comply with Data Protection laws when paying their subscriptions. Thank you.

Online Banking is now available to members to pay their subscriptions online. As publishing details for this facility has compromised its security, members are asked to apply to the Treasurer.

treasurer.mansfieldu3a@gmail.com

Event and Visit Payments

Members are reminded that deposits and payments for events and visits organised by Mansfield u3a and its interest groups are non-refundable, but places may be offered to others.

Please note: if you go on a trip/visit organised by a company, cheques for the event must be made out to the company, not Mansfield u3a.

Changes of Address, etc. Please contact the Membership Secretary, Jean Hatton on (0793 5707582) if you've changed your address, phone number or email recently so that she can update our records.

Disclaimer

The views expressed here are those of the contributors only, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor, the Committee of Mansfield u3a or the Third Age Trust. Nor can any responsibility be accepted for members' announcements or any errors that may occur.

Please send contributions for the next issue to bill20newsletter@gmail.com or by hand to Bill Harrison as soon as you can and by the 1st of the month at the latest. Thanks!

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